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ABSTRACT

This paper presents arguments for the consistent use of modern audiovisual aids in English classes, not as a complementary device, but as a fundamental aid. The intention of the thesis is to: (1) show that the overhead projector can be used to help students develop the four language skills; and (2) encourage English teachers, particularly in Brazil, to use the overhead projector as a normal teaching instrument. For the sake of unity, the "English 900" textbook series is referred to in the paper, as this series is widely and successfully used in Brazil. Advantages to using the overhead projector include: (1) its versatility, (2) its lasting use, (3) the control it gives the teacher, and (4) the energy and work that it saves the teacher. Examples are given of ways in which the overhead projector can be used in developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. One novel use is that of comic strips and plastic or cellophane wrappings, both of which can be used to illustrate structural and cultural points. (AM)

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# THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE TEACHER OF ENGLISH IN BRAZIL

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Dedicated to my wife, Susana.

# THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE TEACHER OF ENGLISH IN BRAZIL

by

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Licenciado in Anglo-Germanic Languages

THESIS
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at Austin
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Elvio Antonio Funck

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# INTRODUCTION

English is becoming more and more popular in Brazil. It is by far the foreign language that has the largest number of students, either in binational centers, located in most capitals and some main cities or in high schools, where the curriculum sometimes offers English for 6 or 7 years. Some schools have also begun to teach English at the primary level. Besides all this, a recent decree by the Brazilian government has made English obligatory as part of the entrance exam for college. However, all this enthusiasm toward English does not seem to have a corresponding consequence, namely, the effective learning of the language, either for reading or speaking purposes. Working in a binational center in Porto Alegre, I am very often impressed by the fact that many students who come to enroll in the center have already had 5 or 6 years of high school English, but the placement test they are submitted to indicates almost nonexisting speaking or listening skills. The percentage of students who fail the English test in the entrance exam for college is not very encouraging either. I am sure this situation can be at

least partially improved if modern audiovisual aids are consistently used in English classes, not as complementary devices, used as sources of entertainment when the class is bored and variety is needed, but as fundamental aids for the achievement of the objectives dictated by the programmatic context.

It was not until 1970, during the short media course I attended in Brazil, that I began to realize that the overhead projector could be one very satisfactory answer to the audiovisual problem in English classes. The seed of hope that was planted then in Brazil became a sapling and grew to maturity during the media course I attended in the Summer semester--1971--at The University of Texas, under the supervision of Dr. Mark Seng. The several actual demonstrations we had in class convinced me that the overhead projector is, in fact, a very useful audiovisual aid in teaching English as a second language and I decided to explore some of its potential in a more detailed study.

My intention upon writing this thesis is two-fold:

(a) To show that the overhead projector can be used to help students develop the four language skills;

(b) To encourage the English teachers in Brazil to use the overhead projector in their classes, not, as Robert Heinich said, as an "afterthought of curriculum planning," something to use in order to fill an occasional time-gap in class, or just to rid the class of boredom, but "as a result of the curriculum development process."[1] The overhead projector has to be inserted in the context of the English class as a normal instrument of teaching, not as a device the students may take as a kind of pastime or amusement.

In the development of this paper I will use as a reference textbook, for the sake of unity, the English 900 series, not only because it is being largely adopted in Brazilian schools especially in binational centers, but also because it is the textbook that has proved to be the most effective during the 15 years that I have been teaching English in Brazil.

As a final remark I also wish to acknowledge that the reading of Dr. Mark Seng's doctoral dissertation (see bibliography), which also discusses the value and

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[1]Quoted by Jerrold E. Kemp in Planning and Producing Audiovisual Materials, p. 3.

use of media in foreign language teaching, proved quite helpful. It is an excellent source of information to all teachers who are interested in exploring the potential of audiovisual aids in the classroom.

# C H A P T E R  I

## ADVANTAGES OF THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR

"Versatility" is perhaps the word that best characterizes the overhead projector. Morton Schultz says that the use of the overhead projector is limited only by the imagination of the teacher[1] and this should be one of the leading ideas of those who decide to work with this device in class; there is practically no limit to its usefulness; besides its possibility of being used in a fully illuminated room, a very critical aspect in large classes, the following advantages quoted from Morton Schultz,[2] deserve some special consideration:

1. "Once a transparency is made, it is permanent." This seems to be trivial; however, this fact has two important consequences: first, the teacher must be more careful in preparing his transparencies, because, once made, they can be used year after year; it will cost him some sacrifice to prepare them according to recommended

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[1]Morton Schultz, The Teacher and Overhead Projection, p. v.

[2]Ibid., p. 10.

techniques, but this sacrifice will soon capitalize both in gain of time and efficiency; second, transparencies must be prepared according to a carefully planned teaching program, not on the spur of the moment, following a sudden burst of didactic enthusiasm; they must be prepared in such a way as to permit their filing under reference titles, because if the overhead is to be an efficient aid, it must be used within the programmatic context. "Media to be used within the instructional design are determined by the requirements of objectives, content, and instructional methods. Media are not supplementary to or in support of instruction, but are the instructional input itself."[3] It is the use of media as a supplementary activity that has discredited the use of audiovisuals for both students and teachers. Using media as an occasional procedure to cheer up the class or just to keep the students busy on a hot Monday morning is, in terms of educational and instructional objectives, more hamrful than helpful.

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[3]Jerrold Kemp, Planning and Producing Audiovisual Material, p. 5.

2. "The teacher faces the class at all times, and speaks directly to the students while projecting material." It does not take a teacher many years of classroom activity to realize how significant this aspect is, particularly when he deals with classes of over 30 students. Kemp reinforces this idea saying that the purchase of overheads ranks first in the audiovisual business and he adds that the fact that the overhead allows the teacher to face the class all the time is very important psychologically, so far as teacher-student relations are concerned.[4]

3. "The teacher is able to maintain complete classroom control and interest in a lesson by simply turning a switch on and off." One of the most difficult tasks any teacher has to face, and particularly a language teacher (because a communication gap is more likely to occur) is the problem of getting the students' attention; the overhead is a very efficient attention "bait." As a matter of fact, any scribbling that flashes on the screen instantly arouses curiosity: it follows that the result of well-prepared transparencies employed in a judicious

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[4] Ibid.

manner must be excellent. The "on and off switch" point is also vital: when the teacher is trying to explain, for example, a Present Perfect problem that the picture he has pinned on the flannelboard has brought about, probably half of the students are still analyzing some interesting visual aspect of the picture which, instead of becoming an attention "bait" becomes a distractor. This disadvantage is obviated (at least partially) if an overhead projector is used and judiciously switched on and off.

4. "The teacher can supplement the transparency with several devices and techniques to further enhance interest in a lesson and maintain attention." Some of the techniques then quoted by Schultz are the use of a transparency as a substitute for the blackboard, the revelation technique and the use of overlays. The revelation technique, which consists of uncovering the transparency gradually, by means of a moving sheet of paper, so that the content of the transparency is revealed by degrees and not flashed all at once on the screen, is particularly useful because it makes possible the "give-and-take" atmosphere that provokes dialogue and favors communication. A variation of the revelation technique is the

"window technique," presented in a 3M Monograph[5] and by which the several pictures of a transparency are covered by conveniently made cardboard masks; these masks are removed one by one allowing the student to focus his attention on a single item at a time.

Besides these advantages quoted by Morton Schultz, another one, which is actually a consequence of those already mentioned, must be underlined: the overhead projector is a time-saving device. Precious minutes of teaching are saved every class-hour, because the professionally minded teacher has already prepared transparencies with the schemes, drills, and exercises that he would otherwise have to write on the blackboard. And all teachers well know how critical the problem of time is in teaching a foreign language.

To conclude this chapter, one more aspect that enhances the value of the overhead projector in teaching English in Brazil must be presented: it saves the teacher's breath and ultimately his health. It is a very common thing in Brazil to have English teachers go from one classroom to another, sometimes for four successive periods,

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[5] Overhead Projection in Foreign Language Classroom, a 3M Monograph, p. 6.

with only ten-minute breaks between classes. Quite obviously, the teacher's voice and nerves are overtaxed, overexerted; as a result, in the last or in the two last periods, the teacher is already tired and is sometimes obliged to sacrifice effective teaching to some less tiring, time-filling practice. The judicious use of the overhead will enable the teacher to direct drills and other activities that will at the same time save his voice and his nerves. The teacher may also couple the tape recorder with the overhead projector and be surprised not only with the progress of his class but also with his own physical fitness after four periods of teaching. Besides all this, the students will be psychologically engaged in making more effort, because they won't be able to help noticing that their English teacher is a good professional, and directs them toward the objectives with great determination and "know-how"; as a result, the problem of discipline will also be reduced.

# C H A P T E R  I I

## THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE SPEAKING SKILL

One author affirms that "The teaching of the speaking skill is more demanding on the teacher than the teaching of any other language skill."[1] She also says that some teachers persuade themselves that if they speak the target language all the time in class, the students will end up being fluent too;[2] such teachers forget that speaking is a complex motor skill involving muscles and nerves and it takes much more than just listening to master the complex and somewhat mysterious psychosomatic mechanism of human communication. Chastain suggests a wise mixture of Skinnerian and cognitive approach to teach the speaking skill[3] and Rivers says that the teacher must "use his imagination in devising situations which provoke the student to the use of the language."[4]

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[1]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 160.

[2]Ibid., p. 160.

[3]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 154.

[4]Wilga Rivers, op. cit., p. 160.

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The overhead projector is a very useful device to "provoke the student to the use of the language" in all stages of advancement. It can provide stimuli and create situations that make the student willing to express himself. The teacher who "concocts" the stimulus or situation at home, according to the programmatic context and takes the stimulus to the classroom in the shape of a transparency, can be reasonably more sure that his students will speak the language than the teacher who simply hopes that the ability to speak the foreign language is a miracle that happens at a certain stage of instruction.

According to Rivers,[5] the speaking skill is acquired in three stages:

(a) early stage: drills, repetition, and guided dialogues, which aim at giving the student a satisfactory basis for the mastery of the phonological, structural, and paralingual system of the target language;

(b) intermediate stage: the students start using the language in a freer manner, asking questions

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[5]Wilga Rivers, op. cit., p. 195.

suggested by the text or circumstances; humor, games, and competition are introduced; the student is invited to tell a short story or present a report. This is the longest stage.

(c) advanced stage: stage of spontaneous expression. Communication becomes easier; however, teachers should not give up regular training.

During the three stages, as Chastain states, "learning should be meaningful. The students should understand at all times what they are being asked to do. They should understand what they are saying."[6]

This division in stages has been given for didactic purposes; in classroom practice these three stages are frequently intermingled. The following subtitles do not intend to show the order of precedence of the several topics in classroom activity. The teacher's manual, the teacher's common sense, and the demands of the objectives will determine when each transparency is to be used.

2.1. Phonetics

Transparency 1, page 14. This transparency shows the position of the phonological apparatus when a specific

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[6]Kenneth Chastain, op. cit., p. 94.

sound of English is uttered. Chastain recognizes that the ability to produce sounds correctly can be taught on a conditioning basis but even these "conditioning drills should be supplemented with drawings of tongue and lip positions and explanations, in order to enhance cognitive understanding of each sound."[7] Not all sounds need to be represented on transparencies, but a particular emphasis should be given to the sounds that cause more trouble to Brazilian students, namely, [I] (b<u>i</u>t), [æ] (c<u>a</u>t), [e] (r<u>ai</u>n), [ʊ] (g<u>oo</u>d), [ə] (<u>a</u>bout), [θ] (<u>th</u>ick), [ð] (<u>th</u>is), [r] (<u>r</u>at), [ŋ] (sin<u>g</u>), [t] (<u>t</u>ime), and, in word final position: [z] (see<u>s</u>), [n] (pe<u>n</u>), and [m] (co<u>m</u>e). A significant consideration here is that, according to a researcher, the vocalic phoneme [I] is the one that occurs with the highest frequency in English, 8.53%, followed by [ə], 4.63%, and [æ], 3.95%; as to the consonants, [n] occurs with a frequency of 7.24%, followed by [t], 7.13%, and [r], 6.88%.[8] As can be seen, the phonemes that cause more trouble to Brazilian students happen to be the ones with high frequencies in English.

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[7] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 154.

[8] George Miller, <u>Language and Communication</u>, p. 204.

Transparency 2, p. 17. This transparency provides the teacher with a very handy instrument to refer to the symbols of the I.P.A. and some key words that contain sounds represented by them. It would be advisable to have a tape recorded rendition of the key-words by a native speaker. The teacher can present this transparency from time to time, without making it an obligation for the students to learn the symbols. Symbols are not a goal in themselves; students should be able to learn them little by little.[9]

Transparency 3, p. 19. The pictures on this transparency are intended to help the students discriminate sounds, particularly those that do not impress students as being different. Brazilian students are somewhat "deaf and dumb" to differences between [I] and [i], [I] and [ɛ], [θ] and [S], [S] and [Z] (in final position), and [ʊ] and [u]. The problem is that these differences are not phonemic in Portuguese but are in English, and as G. A. Miller says, the discussion of problems of speech involves

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[9]The I.P.A. symbols on the transparency are from Clifford Prator's Manual of American English Pronunciation, pp. 4 and 5.

necessarily the ability to distinguish its significant from its nonsignificant aspects.[10]

In order to help the students improve their sound sensitivity to differences that are semantically fundamental in English, the teacher should, making use of transparencies such as No. 3, make his students follow the three steps recommended by Mary Finocchiaro, namely, hear the sound, identify the sound, and produce the sound.[11] This technique is useful not only to beginners; it is particularly beneficial to overcome "the plateau in learning to make correct sounds which students seem to reach after some months of foreign language work. Psychologists have shown that two things can set a learning curve on an upward trend again: a new method of attack or increased incentive."[12] Carefully prepared transparencies can be part of the answer to this plateau crisis, as well as to another problem that puzzles zealous teachers, namely, that the pronunciation of some good students begins to undergo a distinct deterioration after one or two years of study.

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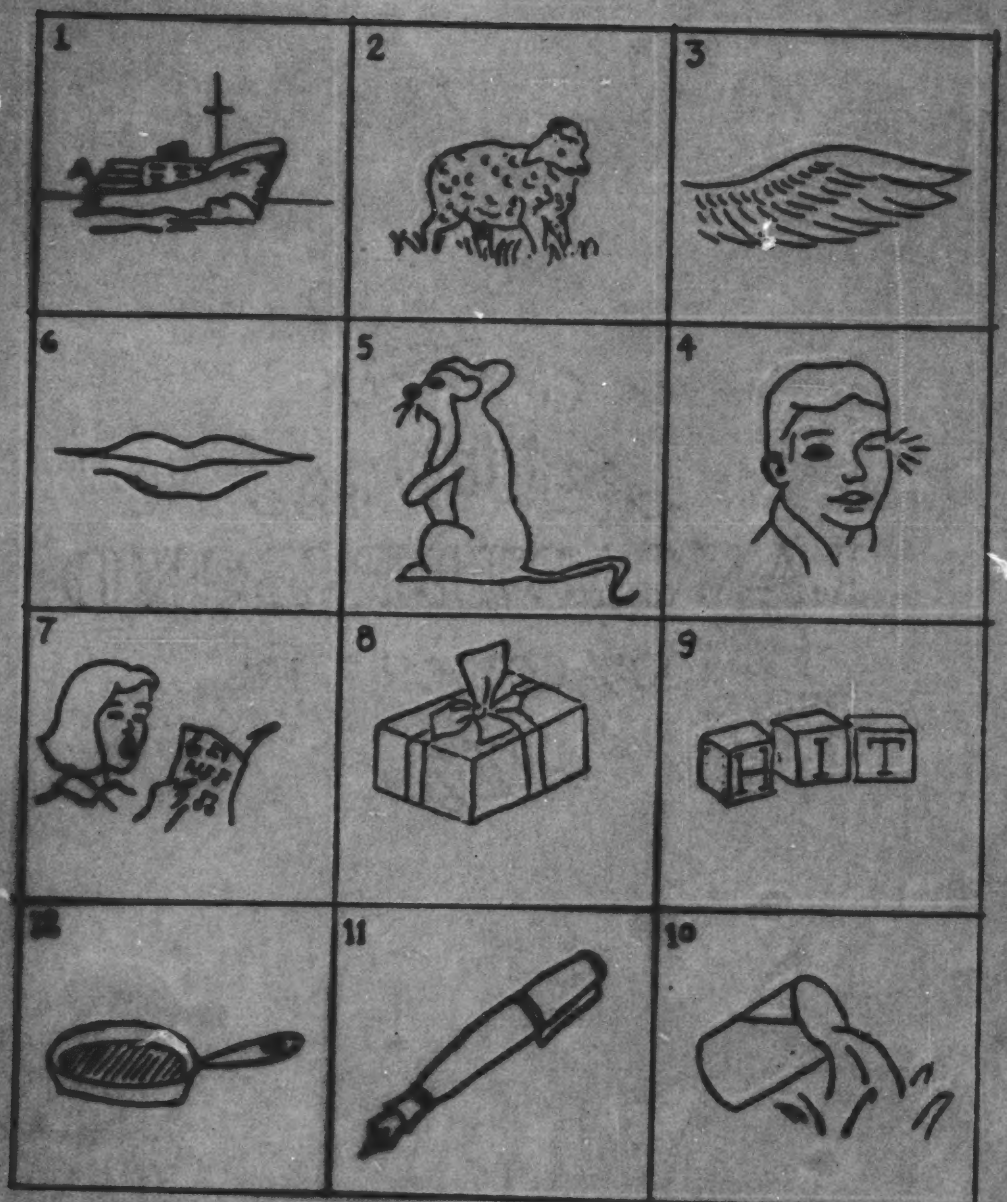
[10]George Miller, op. cit., p. 204.

[11]Mary Finocchiaro, English as a Second Language; from Theory to Practice, p. 55.

[12]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 127.




No. 3

The minimal pairs depicted on Transparency 3, namely, "sheep-ship," wing-wink," "mouse-mouth," "sing-thing," "spell-spill," "pen-pan," represent characteristic difficulties for Brazilian students. When minimal pairs cannot be represented in a simple picture, the written word can be used; such is the case for "place-plays" or "cease-sees."

## 2.2. Base Sentences and Intonation

"One of the basic features of 'English 900' is the introduction and use of Base Sentences throughout the series. The sentences (900 in all) cover the basic structures and vocabulary of the English language."[13] The mastery of these base sentences is fundamental for the success of the course. Each new unit begins with 15 base sentences; the drilling of these sentences, so that meaning, pronunciation, stress, and intonation are mastered, is very demanding both for the teacher and the students. Students seem to lose interest in repetition once they have perceived the meaning of a base sentence and are

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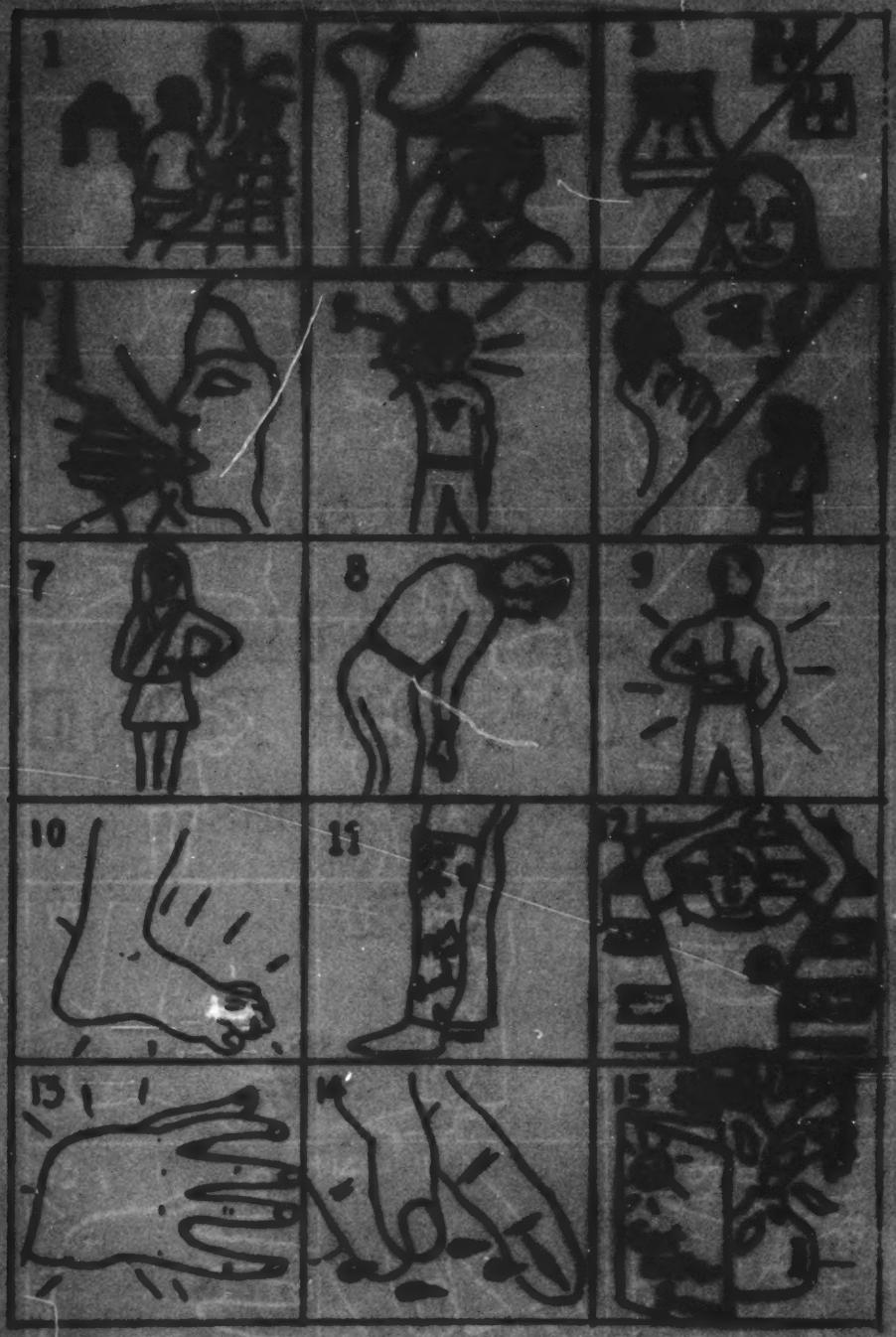
[13] Teacher's Manual, English 900 Series, p. 3.

willing to go ahead with the book; the teacher must devise methods that renew the students' motivation to repeat the base sentences without feeling bored. One of these methods is the use of the overhead projector.

Transparency 4, page 22. The 15 drawings on this transparency are simple pictorial cues to the 15 base sentences presented in Book Three (900), Lesson 8, page 77. Association plays an important part in learning, and mastering the 15 base sentences of each unit is rendered easier and more attractive if visual support is provided. It is not important that each picture be the exact pictorial representation of the content of each sentence; what really matters is that the picture serve as a visual cue that the students (with the skillful help of the teacher) associate with the basic sentence. For instance, picture 5 is associated with "My brother has a bad headache"; picture 14 is associated with "It's bleeding. You'd better go see a doctor about that cut." Experience also shows that students are not very demanding as to the technical perfection of the drawing; what they really want is visual support. "The minority of students, those with good auditory imagery, are far outnumbered by those students who




Ilustr. 4

are visual-minded and respond best to visual stimuli."[14] This kind of transparency also lends itself well to tests in listening comprehension (teacher or tape recorder says the sentence and students indicate the picture corresponding to it) and to review preceding lessons in a somewhat challenging way.

The base sentences depicted (approximately) by the fifteen pictures on transparency number 4 are the following:

1. How are you feeling today?
2. I don't feel very well this morning.
3. I was sick yesterday, but I'm better today.
4. My fever is gone, but I still have a cough.
5. My brother has a bad headache.
6. Which of your arms is sore?
7. My right arm hurts. It hurts right here.
8. What's the matter with you?
9. I've got a pain in my back.
10. Which foot hurts? Is it the left one?
11. How did you break your leg?

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[14] Overhead Projection in the Foreign Language Classroom, 3M Monograph, p. 2.

12. I slipped on the stairs and fell down.
13. Your right hand is swollen. Does it hurt?
14. It's bleeding. You'd better go see a doctor about that cut.
15. I hope you'll be well soon.

## 2.3. Pattern Drills

The main purpose of pattern drills is to enable the student to manipulate structures automatically.[15] Well-conducted drills should have three beneficial effects: train the student's 'speaking apparatus,' teach grammar and give the student an opportunity to learn vocabularly in a contextual situation. The teacher has to devise means of preventing drills from being just parroting. As Chastain says, "Learning should be meaningful. The students should understand at all times what they are being asked to do. They should understand what they are saying."[16] The overhead projector can be used as a device to include the Skinnerian and the cognitive approach within

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[15]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 39.

[16]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Techniques, p. 94.

any given class, a technique suggested by Chastain.[17] For example, drills on the *if* clauses could be preceded by grammar schemes prepared beforehand on a transparency and explained step by step. Only then should the drills involving the three *if* clauses be given. Another point in favor of the overhead, when drills are dealt with, is the fact that the "books closed" technique can be followed more easily; students are usually reluctant to follow this technique and if they "are allowed to follow drills in their books during the drill session, they will feel they know the work before they have really assimilated it: having made a mental note of what is involved for future reference, they may become bored with what seems to be over-insistence on such a simple feature."[18]

The overhead projector can provide two types of cues for pattern drills: pictorial cues and written cues.

*Transparency 5, p.26*. Microtransparencies are small rectangular transparencies (about 2" × 3.5") representing isolated vocabulary item pictures.[19] Every concrete

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[17]Kenneth Chastain, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[18]Wilga Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

[19]The eight "microtransparencies" presented on page 26 were left in one transparency for practical purposes, as far as binding is concerned.

or "picturable" item of vocabulary should be depicted on a microtransparency, which enhances the versatility of the overhead projector. These microtransparencies can either be used isolatedly on the overhead stage or be fitted in a previously prepared frame. Newspapers, magazines, telephone books, and department store catalogues provide the teacher with a large variety of pictures covering almost all concrete items of vocabulary used in a classroom. These pictures, conveniently arranged, become excellent transparencies when processed through a thermofax; the teacher then transforms the transparency into microtransparencies with a pair of scissors and a little patience and ingenuity. Vocabulary taught by means of microtransparencies practically eliminates the need to use the native language, "because a direct bond is established for the student between the meaning, as demonstrated in the image, and the foreign language utterance."[20] Gagne recognizes the advantage of using pictures as the best stimuli to learn vocabulary,[21] and warns teachers

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[20]Wilga Rivers, op. cit., p. 175.

[21]Robert M. Gagne, The Conditions of Learning, p. 266.

against a tendency to give vocabulary an exaggerated secondary importance: "It is at least a likely hypothesis, however, that if a student had acquired a sizable vocabulary, the learning of 'structure' could proceed quite rapidly."[22]

The versatility of the microtransparencies makes it possible to present vocabulary in sets, a procedure that helps learning and fixation. For example, the microtransparencies on page 26 belong to the "professions" set. If the teacher organizes carefully a file of microtransparencies, he can quickly collect the items of vocabulary he will need in the lesson he is going to teach.

Examples of drills using the microtransparencies on page 26:

(a) Stage one

Objective of drill: mastery of the plural allophones.

Frame: They're _____. (Students are supposed to use the item flashed on the screen in this frame.)

(b) Stage two

Objective of drill: mastery of the "want + noun + infinitive" structure. (Due to interference of Portguese,

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[22] Ibid., p. 269.

Brazilian students tend to say,*"He wants that I become a doctor.")

Frame: My father wants me to become a _____.

(c) Stage three:

Objective of drill: mastery of structure involving "past unreal" situations.

Frame: What would you have done if the _____ had not arrived in time?

Besides serving as "cues" for drills, the micro-transparencies on page 26 can be used in more advanced stages as visual stimuli for a conversation on professions. Students could, for instance, discuss which three professions are more important in their opinion and why; or else which would be the last profession, among the nine, they would follow and why.

Transparency 6, page 30. Written cues. Certain types of drills cannot be conducted with pictorial cues, either because the drill does not leand itself to this type of cue, like transformation, contraction, and integration drills, or because certain words, like "never," "shape," "size," are difficult to represent in a pictorial way. Transparency 6 is an example of how written cues

can be presented. The revelation technique is used, in order to concentrate the students' attention on one cue only. The drill is (partially) taken from unit 8, English 900, Book 3, page 80, and is basically centered on sentences that have already been studied; therefore, students are rather familiar with the frames that are going to be used during the drill, which can be conducted as follows. The teacher places the transparency on the stage and covers it with a sheet of paper; he starts the drill saying the first frame:

Teacher: "How are you feeling today?" Students all together or individuals may be asked to repeat several times. The teacher, then, turns on the projector, reveals the first cue, "they" and calls on either one student, a group of students, or the whole class to reformulate the sentence: "How are they feeling today?", etc.

In this same lesson there are cues, like "thumb," "hands," "toe," "knee," that can be given by means of pictures on microtransparencies. The teacher can drill first the sentences that require written cues and then the ones that can be elicited by means of pictorial cues.

Variation is especially necessary when drills are involved, to prevent monotony, boredom, and the consequent decrease of attention and motivation. The teacher

can devise a wide variety of drills; Nelson Brooks in "Pattern Practice,"[23] exemplifies 12 types of drills. Students like to be challenged and when the same kind of drill is presented day after day, or even during a long period of time in one class, they lose the "certain amount of tension or concern (that) is essential to motivation."[24] However, drills cannot be improvised; before preparing his transparency, the teacher must experiment to make sure he is preparing a drill worth being rendered permanent on a transparency and preserved for his future classes.

The following are some drill varieties, taken from those suggested by Nelson Brooks, that can be presented on transparencies. Of course, only the "cue" will show on the transparency.

Transposition: cue: I'm hungry (so)
Student A: I'm hungry.
Student B: So am I.
cue: I won't be here tomorrow (neither)
Student C: I won't be here tomorrow.
Student D: Neither will I.

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[23]Wishon and O'Hare, Teaching English, a Collection of Readings, pp. 82-87.

[24]Madeline Hunter, Theory into Practice: Motivation, p. 8.

Transformation: cue: He knows my address.

Student A: He knows my address.

cue: Question.

Student B: Does he know my address?

cue: used to--affirm.

Student C: He used to know my address.

Integration: cue: They must be honest. This is important.

Student A: It is important that they be honest.

cue: I know the man. He's looking for you.

Student B: I know the man who is looking for you.

cue: I saw the girl. You were dancing with her.

I saw the girl you were dancing with.

Once the teacher is familiar with the mechanics of the procedure, he will see that the overhead projector is of real value in keeping the pace of the drill moving quickly, which, according to Chastain, is the most important thing to bear in mind when dealing with drills. "The

teacher should always be prepared with another stimulus as soon as the students finish the reinforced response."[25] The teacher is responsible for preparing drills that are in keeping with the level of advancement of the students; drills that are too difficult will suffer frequent interruptions and lose some of their effect.

## 2.4. Dialogues

"As the students are repeating the lines of the dialogue, they are accomplishing several objectives. First, they are learning to pronounce the sounds of the language and to imitate its intonation patterns; second, they are becoming familiar with basic structures and vocabulary. The structures will be drilled further in subsequent pattern drills, and the vocabulary will provide them with content words for their 'real' language practice. And third, their auditory memory is being expanded."[26]

The dialogues presented by the English 900 books are very "natural" (not bookish) and equated in difficulty

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[25]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 209.

[26]Kenneth Chastain, op. cit., p. 203.

with the lessons already studied. The overhead projector can be useful in teaching and learning dialogues in two ways: by means of pictures and by means of the written word.

Transparency 7, page 36. The pictures shown on this transparency suggest the approximate sequence of the "pieces of communication" that take place in dialogue number two, page 83, unit 8, Book 3, English 900. The students will associate the sentences with the pictures and both structure and meaning will be more easily grasped. After the sentences of the dialogue have been sufficiently mastered, the teacher may allow students to vary the sentences or part of the sentences and in further stages the same transparency can be used as a visual support for a conversation or a little composition. The dialogue "suggested" by Transparency 7 is the following:

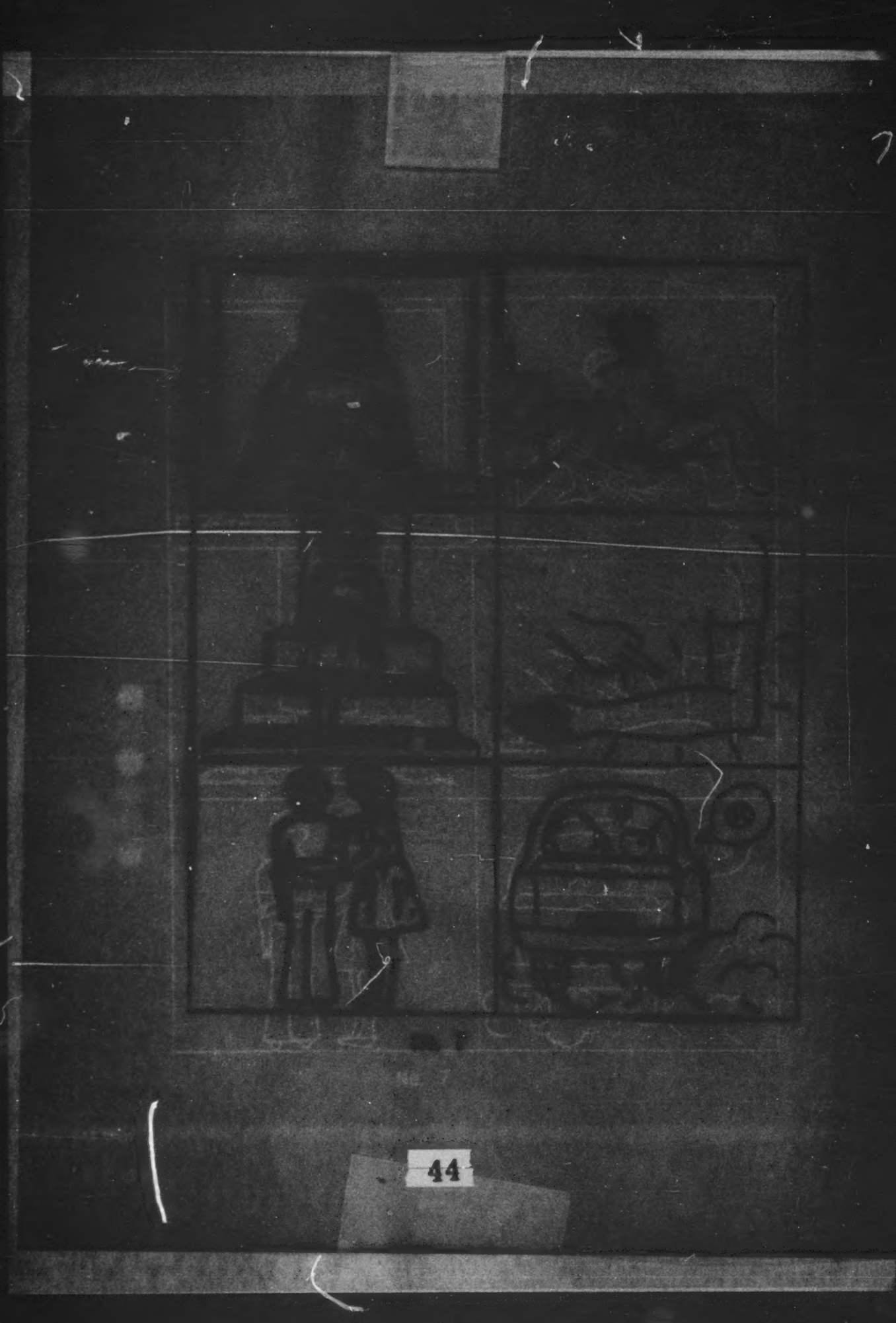
Mother: "Billy! What's the matter? Are you hurt?"

Billy: "I slipped on the stairs and fell down. I think my arm is broken."

Mother: "Oh, I hope not! Which arm is it?"

Billy: "The left one. It hurts right here."

Mother: "Let me see. I don't think it's broken, but we're going to see the doctor right now."



Billy: "I'm glad it wasn't my right arm. That's the one I need for baseball."

Another way of using the overhead to teach dialogues is to write the whole dialogue on the transparency. This technique has the following advantages:

(a) Sounds and symbols are associated;

(b) Visual support is given to students with poor auditory discrimination. "It will give the student something to which to refer when his aural memory fails him, thus giving him greater confidence in his oral work."[27]

(c) The students' attention is concentrated on one line of the dialogue only, by means of the revelation technique.

The teacher can also use the deletion technique: the whole transparency is masked with a sheet of paper, but a number of key words or expressions are allowed to show on the screen through little windows cut out in the masking paper. This gives the student the possibility of reproducing the dialogue making some controlled variations,

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[27]Wilga Rivers, The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher, p. 160.

which helps him to avoid developing "an inflexibility which prevents him from producing the pattern in an appropriate context."[28]

2.5. Situational Conversation[29]

Conversation is the verbal communication resulting from situational stimuli. The more the students are interested in a situation, the more they feel like speaking about it. The teacher can prepare "stimuli" or problems that cover a large area of interest of the class and show them by means of the overhead.

Example: "Paul's soccer team was defeated. Paul gets home after the game and does not want to eat. His mother says . . ."

This little problem is flashed on the screen and the students are asked to express themselves, offering a solution. Groups of students could be allowed two or three minutes to devise a good answer and one representative of the group would say it aloud.

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[28]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 108.

[29]Mark W. Seng, "Use of the Teletrainer in the Spanish Classroom," in Language Learnings: An Application of Psychological Findings to Classroom Activities Involving Media, p. 61.

Another example: "When John was riding home on his bicycle he hit a little dog. The dog ran away limping. John's friend saw the accident, approached John and said . . ."

These "situations" can also be presented as stimuli to make the students write. The whole class could be allowed two or three minutes to write an answer to the "problem." The effect of these "situations" would certainly be improved if they were accompanied by a pictorial sketch.

## 2.6. Oral Discussion of Readings

The English 900 books are accompanied by five readers and it is very advantageous for the students to read these books; the same structures used in the corresponding unit of the classroom textbook are involved, but there is a slight increase in vocabulary and the structures are used in new situations, obliging the student to achieve an important educational objective called "application" in Bloom's taxonomy.[30]

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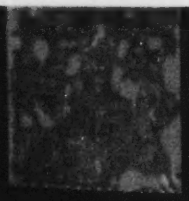
[30]Stanley J. Ahman and Marvin D. Glock, Evaluating Pupil Growth, p. 46.

The overhead can indirectly encourage reading if the teacher uses it to provoke oral discussion on the topic of the readings. Some of the ways in which this can be done are shown here. Short story number 5, page 37 of reader number 3 (The Silver Elephant) is used as an example. This reading corresponds to unit 8, English 900, Book 3, which was dealt with in the preceding parts of this paper. The short story's title is "The Chemistry Teacher."

Transparency 8, page 41. The short story is divided into eight parts, each of which contains four or five leading ideas. These ideas are "leading" only to those who have read the assignment and are practically meaningless to those who have not. Students are asked to reproduce the story orally, finding support from the ideas flashed on the screen. The "window technique" should be used here to prevent the students from getting distracted with the contents of the following parts. The teacher has as many students as possible say something about the story; he also restrains himself from interrupting the student who makes mistakes, but notes the main errors to comment on later.



Another way of connecting readings and "speaking" is the following: the teacher prepares a series of "guided dialogue" questions, not only about the story itself, but about facts suggested by the story and that bring the conversation topic closer to the students' daily life. These questions are printed on a transparency and presented to the class by means of the overhead. This technique, besides being a variation of the "guided dialogue," has the advantage of giving rest to the teacher's voice; it also obliges the students to increase their reading speed, since the cue line should show on the screen for just enough time to make reading possible. The teacher flashes the cue on the screen (revelation technique) and calls on one student; this student chooses the classmate to whom he will direct his question; the student who has answered asks the next question and so forth. The teacher only helps a little when necessary, but the atmosphere of conversation is almost entirely "student talk." Examples of cues, from the story "The Chemistry Teacher":

1. if he (she) has read the whole story
2. why Lawrence was thinking of leaving the University
3. if he (she) thinks money and success are synonymous

4. if he (she) would like to be a teacher
5. if he'd (she'd) rather work indoors or outdoors
6. what made Lawrence decide to continue teaching

Still another technique that can be used is to divide the class into five or six groups and have each group draw some sketches about the story on a transparency. This procedure also gives the students the chance of performing some activities of appreciable educational value, like being able to perform tasks in a group, getting in touch with places that can provide them with X-ray plates, learning how to remove the dull side of an X-ray plate. In the next class, or whenever the teacher thinks it advisable, the groups take over the overhead and present their transparencies, explaining what each sketch represents. Performing in the language is the only way to learn the language.[31]

## 2.7. The Overhead Projector and the More Advanced Levels of Conversation

The repetition of dialogues and the drilling of patterns, no matter how advanced, are not expressions of

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[31]Wilga Rivers, The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher, p. 15.

"real" language skill, but rather means to achieve an end, which is the ability to express one's ideas in the target-language. The transfer from drills to free expression is not easy and the teacher is the person responsible for providing the means to make this transfer possible.[32] Here are some suggestions that show how the overhead can be useful to the purpose of provoking the students to the expression of their own ideas, in more advanced stages:

(a) Transparencies containing ideas that center around topics known as argument-provoking are a good visual support to maintain the climate of conversation. Sample topics: "TV Commercials," "Soccer," "Death Penalty," "The Hippies." The teacher uses the revelation technique and when he perceives that the discussion has reached the point of diminishing returns, he exposes the next two or three lines of the transparency and the group has a new stimulus to keep on talking.

(b) "Color Lifts" from magazines printed on clay paper, such as Time, Life, Manchete, can trigger

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[32]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, pp. 216, 217.

discussion on a large variety of topics. They can also highlight some cultural aspects of the target-language and encourage the students to read. (See pages 72 and 77 for examples of "color lifts.")

(c) Groups of students prepare one topic to be discussed in class. They are asked to prepare one or two transparencies to support the discussion. Sample topics: "The Telephone," "How Our City Began," "Good Manners," "The Circulatory System," "American Holidays," "How a Four-Stroke Engine Works." While one group presents the topic, the students are encouraged to ask questions. The teacher can also let the students choose the topic they want to talk about. The more interest the students have in one topic, the more they feel like speaking about it.

# C H A P T E R  I I I

## THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE LISTENING SKILL

In communication, the ability to understand what is being said is as important as the ability to say it. Chastain hints that teachers tend to forget the importance of improving the students' listening comprehension ability; he suggests that the teacher impress on the students the great importance of careful and constant listening in class, and he quotes Brooks as saying that in a language class students must hear three to five times as much as in a normal math or history class.[1]

The methodical use of the overhead can be part of the answer to the problem of improving the students' listening ability. If the overhead is skillfully coupled with native-speaker rendition of the subject matter, the positive effect of its use is even enhanced. Following are some suggestions of how the overhead projector can be used to the purpose of improving the students' listening skill.

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[1]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 165.

## 3.1. Vocabulary and Sentences

The following technique can be used to train students to hear meaningful sound groupings and not "noises": the teacher chooses six microtransparencies (see 2.3 pages 25-26) picturing vocabulary items that were introduced in the preceding lessons and flashes them all on the screen. He then pronounces the word represented in one microtransparency and the students are supposed to recognize the vocabulary item that was pronounced by writing down the number previously attached to the microtransparency. If what they hear is meaningful, they won't have any trouble, but if they hear just a "noise" they won't be able to pair number and picture correctly. The number of vocabulary items drilled must be increased little by little and even written words (on a transparency) could be used.

The preceding technique can have the following variation, since words tend to be pronounced in a slightly different way when inserted in a sentence: instead of just saying the isolated word, the teacher says a sentence containing the word, and the students try to recognize the vocabulary item that was used in the sentence; this latter technique is closer to real situations than the former.

Another way of improving the students' listening skill is the following: the teacher prepares a transparency with 5 to 10 simple pictures or sketches and has a number attached to them. The transparency is projected on the screen and the teacher describes one of the pictures with a sentence; the students are then supposed to recognize the picture that has been described, writing down its corresponding number. The teacher can use, for example, Transparency 4, referred to in 2.2, page 22, and give the pictures a description that does not coincide with the base sentences studied in the lesson where the transparency was first introduced. For instance, picture 14 could be assigned the sentence, "I cut my finger while sharpening Paul's pencil with a blade."

The three techniques just described are considerably improved if the cues are given by a recorded native voice.

## 3.2. Synonymous Sentences

The teacher prepares pairs of sentences that convey approximately the same meaning. He prints one set of sentences on a transparency, attaching a number to each

one; in class, he reads the other set to the students, one sentence after the other; each time he finishes reading one sentence, he allows some time for the students to locate the synonymous sentence on the screen and write down its number; to prevent guessing, the teacher can write more sentences on the transparency than the number of sentences he is actually going to read. Sample pair:

Teacher: His brother doesn't like to work.

Transparency: It seems that his brother is rather lazy.

A variation of this technique is to have the students spot on the screen the answer to a question they are asked or the question to an answer they are given.

While the teacher speaks, the transparency should be covered (or the overhead turned off) to prevent distraction.

### 3.3 Short Stories

The teacher prepares on a transparency some multiple choice test items (or true-false items) related to the short story he will read in class. After he reads it (or has the students listen to a recorded rendition by

a native speaker) he turns on the overhead and the students are given a reasonable time limit to answer the test items. The teacher can also force the students to work at a quicker pace, showing the test items on the screen by means of the revelation technique, one at a time. This technique is particularly time-saving, since the teacher does not have to distribute printed hand-outs, an activity which is not always free of trouble in large classes; it is also economical; paper and ditto-masters are saved and the transparency can be used year after year.

### 3.4 Pictorial Stimuli

The teacher should welcome any aid that helps his students bridge the gap between "spoken words" and "comprehension of the spoken words." In a listening comprehension exercise he can, for example, use the overhead to show some pictures or sketches that represent, approximately, the sequence of events of the story he is going to tell or read. One example of how this can be done is through comic strips: the sequence is printed on a transparency (without the "ballons"). In class, the teacher exposes the first picture of the sequence (window technique), allows some seconds for the students to absorb it

and starts reading the story he prepared; when he comes to the point where the second picture is supposed to be shown, he exposes it, waits a little and continues the story this way through the end. The advantage of this process is that it gives visual support to students with poor auditory discrimination, increasing, therefore, their degree of motivation.

As has already been stated, students are not very demanding as to the artistic perfection of the pictures they are shown; the three pictures shown in Transparency 9 (page 52) are very simple, but illustrate very well the story of the "blind" beggar who was discovered reading a newspaper early in the morning and simply said that the sign "Pity the Blind" referred to his dog.

### 3.5 Dictation

Dictation seems to be a practice that has been abandoned by many foreign-language teachers. Some authorities, however, like Rivers[2] and Chastain, recognize that it is an advantageous practice when, or course, inserted

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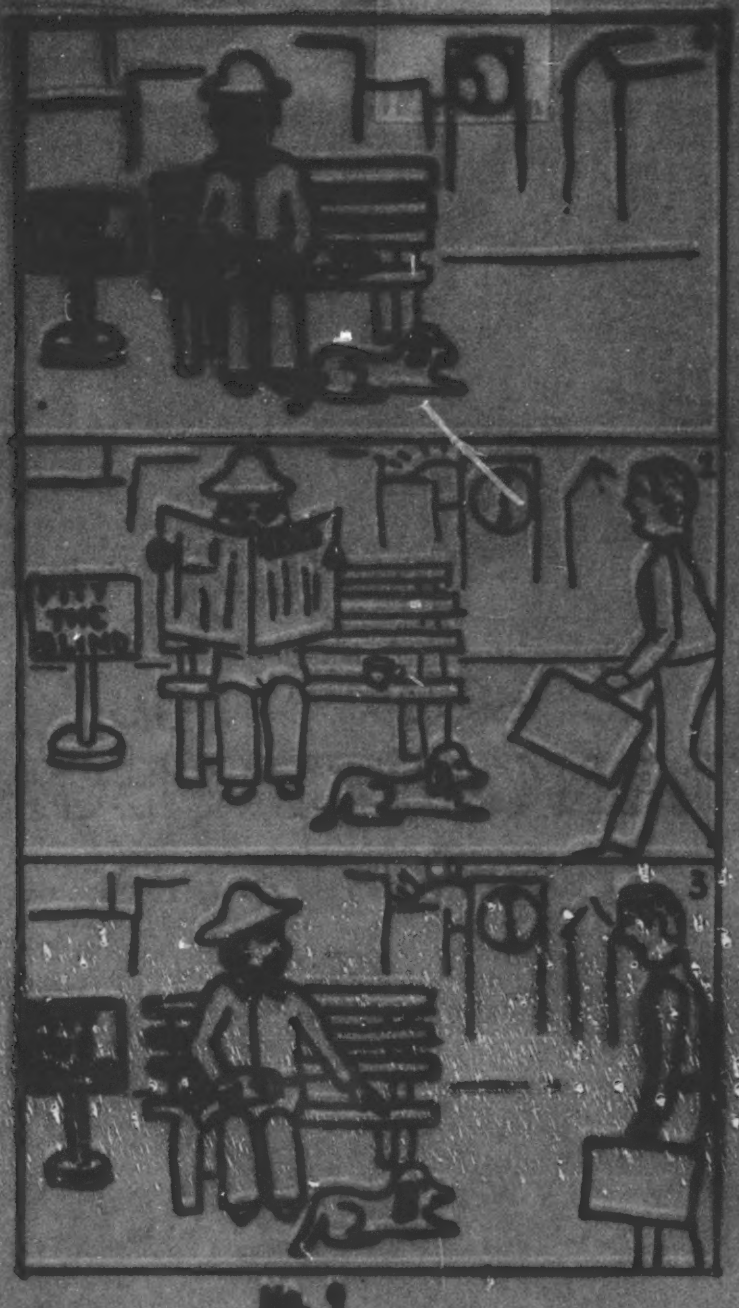
[2]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 212.



No. 9

in a programmatic context and supported by clear objectives. Chastain recommends dictation as a beneficial technique in developing auditory memory and, consequently, in helping to improve the students' listening skill.[3]

There are at least two instances in which the overhead can be used in administering a dictation:

(a) The "spot-dictation technique": the whole dictation is printed on a transparency; before flashing it on the screen, the teacher carefully masks some items of vocabulary here and there with a piece of paper. The dictation begins at a normal rate of speed, and students are asked to write down the words that are masked. This type of dictation has the advantage of being faster and easier to be corrected.

(b) Dictation of "new material": If the teacher dictates only material that has been taken "verbatim" from the textbook, he is testing for knowledge or recall only. Some of the students will write from memory, subvocalizing the sentences in their native language way of pronouncing

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[3]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 170.

("child" pronounced [ʃild] in a Portuguese way), because they know what excerpts from the textbook the teacher uses and prepare them at home to get a good grade. If the teacher gives a dictation that presents "novel-situations," that is, one that covers subject-matter from the unit that has been studied but is not taken "verbatim" from the book, he is testing for complex achievement, which has more educational value than simple recall.[4] The best way for the students to correct the "novel-situation" dictation is to print it on a transparency and expose it to the whole class on the screen.

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[4]Marvin Glock and Stanley Ahman, Evaluating Pupil Growth, p. 133.

# C H A P T E R  I V

## THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE READING SKILL

The debate on when the written word should be introduced in teaching a foreign language has not yet yielded a satisfactory answer. Whatever the final outcome of this debate, however, we must face the fact that in most of the cases the students either have textbooks or can refer to them after class; also, the carefully guided use of the written word early in the course has the support of many good teachers and authorities in foreign language teaching. Fernand Marty states that several experiments indicate that a long time lag between the presentation of the spoken word and the written word does not produce better results than a short one.[1] Rivers says that the written word is of "incalculable help to students with poor auditory discrimination" but she advises that "in the early stages the student should not see anything in writing that he has not already heard or said."[2] Chastain says that reading should always be

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[1]Fernand Marty, Language Laboratory Learning, pp. 75-76.

[2]Wilga Rivers, The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher, p. 113.

encouraged.[3] Another relevant fact is that the majority of the Brazilian students learn English much more for the purpose of reading rather than speaking, as opportunities to speak English are somewhat scarce.

Students need encouragement and stimuli to be motivated to read in the target language, just as they do to read in the native language. Part of this encouragement and stimuli can be provided by the use of the overhead projector. Some of the uses of the projector suggested in the preceding chapters already involve the acquisition or application of the reading skill, particularly in Chapter II, part 2.6, page 39, where reading in the 900 Book series was discussed. The following are other suggestions that can prove helpful in developing the reading skill.

4.1. Reading Aloud

Reading aloud is recommended as beneficial for the development of the reading skill, but students often find it boring.[4] They can feel more motivated and challenged if they are invited to read on the screen and if

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[3]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 115.

[4]Ibid., p. 178.

the reading-aloud session is given a game atmosphere. One way of doing this is by flashing on the screen ten "novel-situation" sentences (using vocabulary and structures studied in preceding lessons); the class is previously divided into two or more groups and each group assigned its readers. Of course, the teacher sees to it that every student reads, but not necessarily on the same day. One of the groups can be assigned the task of tape recording the session and evaluating the readers. The teacher (or a student) handles the overhead and allows only the sentence to be read to appear on the screen, using the revelation technique. One of the advantages of this technique is that the teacher can use the transparency to demonstrate the groupings of meaningful mouthfuls; these groupings can even be underlined or circled. The student can see, for instance that "cup of coffee" is not read [kəp-əv-kɔfi] but rather [kəpəkɔfi] . "Students need much practice in reading in meaningful mouthfuls" as Rivers says.[5] As the students get to more advanced stages, the teacher can use this technique to present jokes, puns,

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[5]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 225.

anecdotes or brief reports of events connected to the students' actual lives. Students are always motivated when they feel themselves involved in a situation.

4.2. "Speed-Reading"

When students are a little more familiar with the written symbols, the teacher can challenge them to achieve a certain degree of speed-reading ability. A short narration, a joke, some sentences about a famous man's life or whatever the teacher thinks advisable is prepared on a transparency. On another transparency the teacher prepares a short multiple-choice test or true-false quiz on the text that is to be read. He exposes the text on the screen and allows a comfortably short period of time for the students to read it, for example, a little more than it takes himself to read the text. Immediately afterwards, he exposes the test transparency and allows some time for the students to answer it. He can then correct the text and discuss the reading, exposing it again for clarifications. The students are thus educated in reading fast with understanding, which is as advantageous in the target-language as it is in the native language.

## 4.3. Songs-Poems-Sayings

The English language has a very characteristic pattern of rhythm and intonation. Not mastering this pattern makes reading clumsy and often impairs meaning. The introduction in class of songs, poems and sayings is not only a way of improving the students' pronunciation,[6] and of showing them some cultural aspects of the target-language, but a very good technique for training them in correct reading. Good songs, poems and sayings are available for all levels; they can be presented to students by means of the overhead projector, which has the following advantages:

(a) time is not wasted whether in writing on the blackboard or distributing hand-outs;

(b) the material can be presented gradually and paced by means of the revelation technique;

(c) whenever the teacher wants to review the material or just repeat it for fixation, he just brings the transparencies to class. Students very often lose the hand-outs, or just leave them at home.

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[6] Wilga Rivers, op. cit., pp. 121-122.

## 4.4. Advanced Stages of Reading

"For the development of fluent reading, the student must be encouraged to read a great deal."[7] Of course, the teacher is the person responsible for giving the students this encouragement. He must resort to all available techniques to stimulate the students to read intensively and extensively. The overhead projector can be used to encourage reading in the following ways:

(a) Showing attractive "color-lifts" and interesting texts from magazines such as Life, Time, National Geographic Magazine, Readers Digest and even comics. Some articles and pictures published in these magazines are so interesting that when shown to an advanced class and discussed, the students will normally tend to read them on their own. (Examples of "color-lifts" are presented on pages 72 and 77.)

(b) The teacher assigns a book to be read, for example, David Copperfield, divides the class into a number of groups and gives each group the task

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[7] Ibid., p. 230.

of preparing one or more transparencies on one or more chapters; these transparencies are presented to the whole class on a determined day by members of the group.

As has already been said, most students of English as a second language in Brazil will have only occasional opportunities to speak the language. English will no doubt be more useful to them as an instrument to explore the written language. Skillful teaching with the help of the overhead can help them meet that expectation.

# C H A P T E R  V

## THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR AND THE WRITING SKILL

Chastain warns the teacher of the danger of delaying the exercise of writing the language to later stages; he says that after the end of each chapter "the students should be able to express themselves orally or in written form about the topic or topics of that chapter. The beginning is at the beginning. There is no magic day for which all must wait in order to be able to write."[1]

The overhead projector also proves to be useful in helping the students develop the writing skill. It can be used in the first stages of advancement, when writing is almost synonymous with copying, in the intermediate stages, when more controlled writing is used, "a writing in which a student cannot make a serious error if he follows directions,"[2] and in advanced stages, when writing is more creative and the structural problems have almost

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[1]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 222.

[2]Lois Robinson, in Teaching English as a Second Language, by Harold B. Allen, p. 226.

been overcome. The following items are suggestions as some of the ways in which the overhead can be used to stimulate writing.

5.1. Vocabulary

The teacher picks out the main vocabulary items that were studied in the unit and shows its pictorial presentations on the screen. He then asks the students to write down the words that correspond to the pictures. He can have the whole class repeat the vocabulary first, to reinforce pronunciation and diminish the problem of subvocalization in the native-language pattern of pronunciation while they are writing the English words. This exercise will also help the students to "fix" the vocabulary, as it is known that writing the word is helpful in learning it.

5.2. Pattern Drills

The student's ability to repeat drills orally is not a sign that he can also write the drills.[3] Writing

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[3]Kenneth Chastain, op. cit., p. 231.

drills helps the students to fix the structures and vocabulary at the same time that the writing skill is being acquired.

With the microtransparencies presented on page 26 (professions), the teacher can give the students the following orientation:

Write 9 sentences following this model:

"Is he a _____? No, he isn't a _____;
he is a _____."

or: "Are you a _____? Yes, I am a _____."

or: "They are not _____, but they are _____."

or: "While I was talking to the _____, my brother was calling the _____."

Microtransparencies can be used in intermediate and advanced stages to serve as cues for the writing of more complicated patterns, such as adverbial clauses, "if" clauses, patterns using connectors, and so on.

Drills involving transformation, transposition and integration, such as the ones presented in 2.3, page 32 are particularly practical for the purpose of improving the students' writing ability. The teacher just flashes them on the screen and, instead of drilling them orally, allows some minutes for the students to practice them in writing.

5.3. Answer Questions

The teacher prepares a set of 5 to 10 questions on a transparency and has the students answer them in writing. The questions must be equated with the students' abilities and, whenever possible, involve "novel situations," including facts directly related to the students' lives, their interests, local events, important headlines from national or local newspapers, etc. If the teacher asks only "bookish" questions, the chance of boredom being introduced is increased and motivation diminishes. The questions may also be related to a short story the teacher has read or to a tape recorded rendition, which will serve not only as a test to the students' listening ability, but also as an opportunity for them to use the written language.

5.4. Dialogues

For intermediate and advanced stages, the following dialogue technique[4] can prove very effective in stimulating the students to write: a transparency shows on

[4]Mark H. Seng, Language Learning: An Application of Psychological Findings to Classroom Activities Involving Media, p. 72.

the screen two (or more) simple and suggestive scenes, like the ones depicted on Transparency 10, page 67. Nothing is written inside the balloons. The teacher divides the class into groups of two or four students and gives each group a piece of transparency (or common wrapping plastic) on which the exact replica of the balloons depicted on the overhead transparency has been previously drawn. The students are then asked to write down inside the balloons what they suppose the two characters involved in the picture would say. The teacher then collects the transparencies and fits one after the other on top of the original one, so that the "conversation" invented by the students shows inside the balloons. After exposing all the dialogues, the teacher shows them again, this time correcting the mistakes and making comments. The teacher can also invite the students to try to draw some scenes themselves and bring them to the class to be shown and motivate writing.

5.5. Pen-Pals

A pen-pal very often plays a decisive role in making a student aware of the value of the foreign language. Teachers must encourage their students to get in

No. 10

touch with English-speaking students by mail. Besides the educational aspects involved, the students become aware of cultural differences and usually their interest in learning the foreign language receives a substantial and decisive impulse.

The teacher can use the overhead projector[5] to show the class a letter that one of the students has received from his pen-pal, and comment on it, explaining not only new vocabulary and new structures, but also cultural aspects that the letter brings out. Of course, the teacher should always be very sensible about showing these letters, making sure no feelings are hurt. Transparency 11, page 69, is a facsimile of a letter written by an American girl, published with her permission; besides the typical American handwriting, the following aspects could be pointed out by the teacher:

(a) vocabulary: handsome, kids, spooky, treats;

(b) structure: "enjoy" followed by "ing";
"want" followed by "noun" plus "to";

(c) culture: Halloween, dating, football.

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[5]It takes two easy steps to transform a letter into a transparency: first, the letter is xeroxed (unless it is written in pencil, India ink or typed); second: the xeroxed copy is fed into a thermofax and the letter, now a transparency, is ready for the overhead projector. (Note by the author.)

[redacted] Mary Drive
[redacted], Texas
December 17, 1970

Dear [redacted],

I really enjoyed receiving your interesting letter and handsome picture. I [redacted] ☆ showed it to my friends at school. They like it and what they say is the other countries.

In answer to some of your questions, Hallowe'en was once a religious celebration, but now children dress up in scary costumes and sneak out and go door-to-door for candy.

When I say I have a date, I mean I am going out for the evening with a boy. This can be just a friendship - not a romance. Christie instead of saying "I would like you to kiss me," we say "I want you to kiss me." If I go to [redacted] Jr. High, that is Jewish American Girls Club, mostly with the Hanukkah Holiday. You talking about money in your letter with the enclosed Pat? It's played mostly with the feet, isn't it?

Well, I'm riding in the Christmas shopping with my family. Oh - thanks for the stamps you sent. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! With love, Debbie

No. 11

The mistakes in spelling that occur indicate that, as Chastain says, "the message is more important than the code";[6] when the students realize that native speakers also make mistakes, they will feel more relaxed when writing themselves.

5.6. Composition

A carefully prepared transparency or "colorlift" can be used as a visual support and stimulus for composition. For instance, Transparency 9, page 52, "The Blind Man Story," can be used as a stimulus for composition at almost any level: beginners are invited to write one simple sentence about each picture; intermediate students reproduce the story they heard in the listening comprehension lesson; more advanced students are invited to try an essay on "Cheating" or "How to Make Your Dog Work for You" or "The Problem of Poverty in Our City" or even reproduce the story itself with more richness of detail and vocabulary.

The teacher who has a good eye for choosing appropriate pages from magazines and transforming them

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[6]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 234.

into color-lifts (a very inexpensive technique) will, little by little, collect precious material not only to stimulate writing, conversation and reading, but also to introduce cultural aspects of the target-language. The color-lift on page 72 (from Time Magazine, March 6, 1972)[7] is helpful in exercising the writing skill in several ways:

(a) Copying: the practice of copying, considered advantageous,[8] can be more stimulating if students are invited to copy from the screen and given a somewhat challenging period of time to do it; the teacher can even control the pace of copying by means of the revelation technique.

(b) Learning or fixing vocabulary: after having students read the text once or twice and making sure the new vocabulary has been understood the teacher can mask some key items in the text, ten words for instance, and ask the students to copy the text trying to include the words that have

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[7]Published with the permission of Time.

[8]Wilga Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 245.

*In 1874, somebody made a doll and gave it to a little girl.*

*This doll has been to at least 500 fancy tea parties... seen two daddies off to war...absorbed an ocean of tears...survived nine kidnapings and a total of 42 years in various closets and drawers.*

*Now that you're moving her across the country, wouldn't you like to know that the people who move her know how important she is?*

*Allied Van Lines.*
*We move families, not just furniture.*® **ALLIED VAN LINES**

been masked; the students are allowed to substitute synonyms for the missing words or any other word that would make sense in the context.

(c) Questions: the students are given some time to prepare a few questions, perhaps five, about the text. The overhead is then switched off and oral practice follows. The teacher may set a limit to the type of questions, for example: two "wh," two "or" and one "yes-no" question, or whatever he thinks more in keeping with the level of achievement of the students.

(d) Composition proper: the color-lift is used simply as a stimulus to composition in more advanced stages; this composition may either focus on quality or quantity; in the first case, students are asked to write 3 or 4 short paragraphs on any topic that the picture might suggest, but they should be as careful as possible to avoid mistakes; in the second instance, they can write more freely, trying to achieve as much "quantity" as possible, without worrying about mistakes. According to an experiment conducted at U.C.L.A., students who write in "quantity," even making

lots of errors, end up writing better than those who write very little and without mistakes.[9]

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[9]Kenneth Chastain, The Development of Modern Language Skills, p. 234.

# C H A P T E R  V I

## COMICS AND TRANSPARENT WRAPPINGS

The overhead is useful in showing comic strips, which is an interesting way of teaching structures, vocabulary, everyday expressions and dialogues, and cultural aspects of the target-language. A short session of carefully selected comic strips enlivens the class, breaks the monotony of drills and brings a refreshing renewal to motivation.

### 6.1. Comic Strips

Comic strips that have been made into transparencies can be given a number and classified under specific titles, so that the teacher has ready reference to them when explaining one particular point of grammar, or vocabulary or idioms, or cultural characteristics. Comic strips can also be used in the following ways:

(a) The teacher masks the balloons and the students are asked to repeat the dialogues that take place;

(b) The students prepare questions on the story and ask them to their classmates;

(c) The students are asked to reproduce the episode in writing;

(d) As comics often have an interesting message and frequently deal with problems of today's world, they can serve as stimuli for composition or conversation in more advanced stages;

(e) If the drawings and balloons are large enough, the technique described in 5.4, page 65, could be attempted.

The "Sherlock Holmes"story on page 77,[1] is a color-lift from Time Magazine, February 28, 1972; besides presenting a somewhat rich vocabulary, it is a good starting point for a discussion or a composition on "Smoking" or "The Use and Abuse of Propaganda Techniques."

## 6.2. Transparent Wrappings

The United States market is flooded with plastic and cellophane wrappings. As a matter of fact, there are

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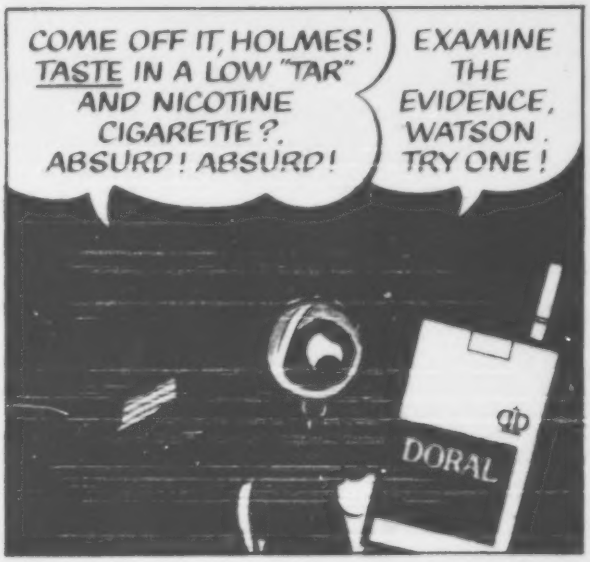
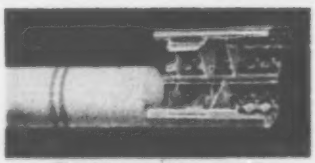
[1]Published with permission of Time Magazine.

© 1971 R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO COMPANY, WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.

THIS IS IT, WATSON! THE VERY PLACE THAT LADY MONTMARCH HEARD THE STRANGE SINGING!
THE CASE OF THE SINGING CIGARETTE!
TASTE ME! TASTE ME!

CAN'T FATHOM IT! WHAT COULD IT BE, HOLMES?
FROM THE CLUES, I DEDUCE IT IS A CIGARETTE... NAMED DORAL... LOW IN "TAR" AND NICOTINE CONTENT... WITH A UNIQUE FILTER SYSTEM AND REMARKABLY GOOD TASTE!





The filter system you'd need a scientist to explain ...but Doral says it in two words, "Taste me"

FILTER 14 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine. MENTHOL 14 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report AUG.'71.

few items of food or clothing that are not wrapped either in plastic or in cellophane. It does not take much effort to discover that a very large number of these wrappings are ready, effective and inexpensive transparencies. Their usefulness in a classroom is beyond question: they will bring the foreign people much closer by giving a direct impression of some of their ways of living, the kinds of food they eat and the specific words they use to refer to them; no book or textbook can be so effective in this respect as a real plastic bag of, for example, potato chips, that is shown on the screen.

The transparency enclosed in an envelope, back cover, is taken from a plastic bag used to protect clothes that are returned from a dry cleaning service. Its message, its vocabulary and its cultural significance make of it a handy and interesting visual.

# CONCLUSION

"The change in performance is what leads to the conclusion that learning has occurred."[1] The change in performance desired in a foreign language student is his disposition or capability of understanding the foreign code and communicating in it, whether in speaking or in writing. If, after some years of energy-consuming activity toward the achievement of this "change in performance," this goal has not been reached in a satisfactory way, as reality often proves, a failure must have occurred in one of the "major portions of a total learning occurrence" established by Gagne, who states that learning begins with a stimulus situation and continues with an apprehending phase, an acquisition phase, a storage phase, and, finally, a retrieval phase, where learning can be observed.[2] All that has been said in the preceding six chapters is generally intended to enrich and strengthen the first link of Gagne's learning process, namely, the stimulus situation; the stronger this first link, the more likely the other phases

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[1]Robert Gagne, The Conditions of Learning, p. 5.

[2]Ibid., p. 71.

of the process will follow effectively, at least in normal situations. Of course, the overhead projector is not a "miracle-working gadget" that infallibly triggers all the phases of the learning process; learning a foreign language is difficult and the easy enticement of magic methods has discouraged many teachers and misled many students. Neither can it be said that all the possibilities of the use of transparencies in foreign language teaching have been exhausted in these six chapters; far from it; "foreign language transparencies are somewhat self-propagating by nature, and every time the teacher uses one, several new uses suggest themselves."[3]

One of the purposes of this paper has been to try to give Brazilian English teachers (and foreign language teachers in general) an idea of how the overhead projector, used within a frame of carefully planned operational objectives, can often establish the difference between one year of frustration and one year of stimulating success in teaching English. The author is very happy if this purpose is achieved at least by some of the several thousands of English teachers in Brazil.

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[3]Overhead Projection in Foreign Language Classroom, 3M Monograph, p. 40.

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# V I T A

Elvio Antonio Funck was born in Montenegro, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, on February 27, 1936, the son of Edgar Funck and Irma Funck. He completed high school in Porto Alegre, in 1955 and received the degree of Licenciado in Anglo-Germanic Languages from the Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio Grande do Sul in 1961. During the following years he worked as a teacher in several high schools and in 1968 was admitted as an Assistant Professor of English at the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil. In September, 1971 he entered the Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin, majoring in Foreign Language Education the following year. Mr. Funck is married to Susana Borneo Funck, a graduate from Mount Holyoke College, and they have a daughter, Flavia, born on the first of May, 1971.

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